

OWL MORTALITY AND ABANDONED FISHING LINE

by

Richard L. Knight

Jeff Skriletz

Washington Department of Game

600 N. Capitol Way

Olympia, Washington 98504

and

Dana C. Ryan

424 S. Edison St.

Olympia, Washington 98501

On 18 May 1978, in Thurston County, Washington, a live Barn Owl (*Tyto alba*) was found tangled in monofilament fishing line in the vicinity of a freshwater lake. The fishing line was removed and the owl was released unharmed.

On 1 July 1978, in the same county, a dead Screech Owl (*Otus asio*) was found hanging by monofilament fishing line suspended from an Oregon ash (*Fraxinus latifolia*) growing along the Deschutes River. The fishing line was wrapped several times around the owl's right wing at the juncture of the wing with the body. There were approximately 3 m of fishing line hanging from the tree. The line was firmly caught in the tree, causing the owl to hang suspended in the river which apparently caused death by drowning.

Abandoned fishing line is commonly found along heavily fished waterways (Anonymous, Oregon Wildl. 33:6, 1978). Although the frequency of fishing-line collisions by birds is not known, it would be worthwhile to monitor such occurrences. Conceivably, fishing line in trouble areas could be removed.

We thank Walter Matia for assistance in the field and Dr. Dwight G. Smith and Stephen G. Jones for critically reading this note.

ANNOUNCEMENT

The New England Hawk Migration Committee of the Connecticut Audubon Council wishes to announce plans for a *New England Regional Hawk Migration Conference* to be held in April 1981. This meeting will commemorate ten years of organized hawk watching in New England. Detailed announcements will be forthcoming. For information write: Hawks, P.O. Box 2121, Portland, Connecticut 06480.

Ten years of New England hawk migration data are now available collectively at the library of Taft School in Watertown, Connecticut 06795. Persons wishing to use these data may do so by contacting New England Hawk Migration Committee member, Neil Currie (203-274-3050).